



FACT SHEET

Economic Competitiveness Strategy

Introduction

The California Workforce Investment Board (State Board) has adopted a Sector Strategy Framework to address the State's workforce development system needs (including the State's labor exchange, workforce education and training programs). This framework includes regional collaboration, data driven planning and strong public/private partnerships, to achieve the State's vision of bolstering regional economic competitiveness, a well coordinated and effective workforce development system, providing solutions to industry needs as well as the needs of job seekers at every level.

What are Sector Strategies?

Sector strategies provide an effective approach to organizing a comprehensive workforce development system that is capable of responding to market forces and demographic factors effecting businesses. Sector strategies exhibit these key elements:

- **Target a specific industry cluster;** develops a data driven, finely tuned knowledge of the interdependence between business competitiveness and the workforce needs of the targeted industries
- **Build regionally based partnerships** of employers, training providers, community organizations, and other key stakeholders around specific industries
- **Address the workforce needs** of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers
- **Bolster regional economic competitiveness** by aligning education, economic, and workforce development planning and leveraging of resources
- **Promote systematic change** that supports innovation and achieves ongoing benefits for industries, workers, and communities

Why are Sector Strategies Important?

The State Board has made extensive investments to bolster the State's understanding of California's economy's regional industry cluster composition. California's global economic competitiveness and prosperity are reliant upon industry's ability to be innovative as it responds to quickly evolving technology and emerging competitors. Globally, businesses are recognizing that they must act in a cooperative and efficient manner that has results in regional clustering. Sector strategies, may assist these needs by:

- Sustaining and growing their regional industries by ensuring an adequately skilled workforce that adapts to change
- Allowing diverse regional populations to participate in regional industry growth
- The application of Sector Strategies provides a better idea of the type of talent that industries need to keep them competitive. It also facilitates the evaluation of the education components needed to deliver this talent.

How Can Sector Strategies Be Applied Effectively?

The effective application of sector strategies requires the active participation of all pertinent members related to the sector. This includes the full cooperation of public and private sector employers and organizations, as well as educational and funding institutions. The State Board will focus on the five areas of evaluation that has been adopted from the collaborative work undertaken by the National Governors Association (NGA), the National Network of Sector Partners (NNSP) and the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce (CSW):

- **Impact on Jobseekers and Workers:** How has the sector partnership met the needs of jobseekers and workers for relevant training and employment?
- **Impact on Employers and Industry:** How has the sector partnership met the needs of employers for skilled workers?
- **Impact on the Community:** How has the sector partnership changed how the “community” works together to meet worker and employer needs?
- **Effectiveness of the Partnership:** Is there evidence that the partnership itself is organized, effective, and efficient?
- **Systems Change:** Has the sector partnership changed the behavior of education systems, workforce development programs/policies, industry Human Resource policies?

What Resources Can Be Used to Implement and Manage Sector Strategies?

The Sector Strategy Toolkit is a collaboratively developed, web-based tool intended to help design and implement sector policies and frameworks that position the regions to strengthen regional, skills-based economic competitiveness. The Toolkit contains information, resources and templates to be used in launching and managing a state sector strategy. It was developed as part of the NGA State Sector Strategy Learning Network, in conjunction with its two project partners - The CSW and the NNSP. The link <http://sectorstrategies.org/toolkit> is provided to find more information about the toolkit.

What Are Other States Doing?

Over \$150 million dollars have been invested in sector strategies across 12 states: Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Washington. Investments range from \$500,000 in North Carolina to \$65 million in Arkansas (primarily Career Pathways) for an average investment of just over \$13 million per state. There are over 400 “local sector partnership projects” spanning 15 industries funded and supported by the 12 states in the Learning Network, an average of just over 36 per state. Most common industries are: Manufacturing, Health Care, Biotechnology/Bioscience, Logistics, Agriculture and Food Production, and Energy – Traditional and Renewable.

